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DIRECT EDITION



I am SO
RELIEVED YOU
ARE ENJOYING
YOURSELF, MR.
WILSON.

YOU HAVE NO
IDEA HOW COOL THIS
IS, I MEAN, WELL, YOU
DO, SINCE YOU DO
THIS ALL THE TIME,
BUT--

I UNDERSTAND,
BE QUIET.

I APOLOGIZE
FOR MY DELAY IN
FINDING YOU.

— WHEN
TRANSPORTING
YOU TO THE
NETHERREALMS, I
HAD NOT ACCOUNTED
FOR THE STRANGE
ENERGY WHICH STILL
SUFFUSES BOTH
YOUR BODIES.

WE STILL
GOT THE STINK
OF TIME TRAVEL
ON US, DON'T WE?
WE'RE LIKE CHRONAL-
HOPPING
FRENCHMEN...

...THOUGH, MAY
I SAY, I'D EXPECT
THAT DR. STRANGE,
MASTER OF THE MYSTIC
ARTS, SHOULD'VE BEEN
ABLE TO DEAL WITH A
LITTLE THING LIKE
THAT...

GAAA!

OH, THIS
IS SO
COOL!

BE THAT AS
IT MAY, I WILL NOW
ATTEMPT TO DELIVER
YOU AS CLOSELY TO
YOUR TARGET AS I
AM ABLE TO...

BE PREPARED
FOR POTENTIAL
DANGER.

UHM--WHAT
DO YOU MEAN BY
POTENTIAL?

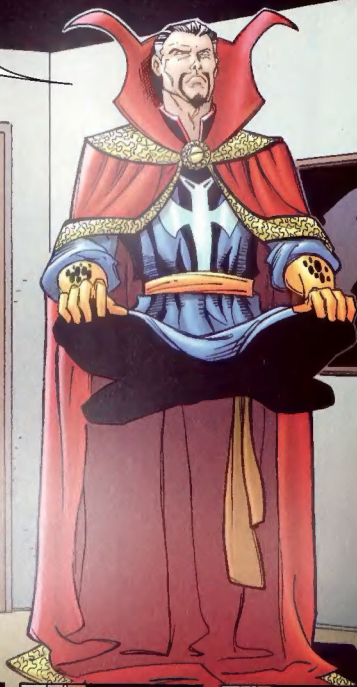
BUT
WE MAY
NOT?

YOU MAY
ENCOUNTER
OPPOSITION,
BOB.

BUT
YOU
MAY.

BUT WE
MAY NOT,
RIGHT?

-SIGH-



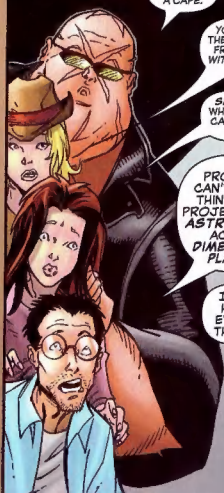
SILLY
CAPE. I
WISH I HAD
A CAPE.

YOU'D NEED
THE CURTAINS
FROM GONE
WITH THE WIND,
BOSS.

SHHHH--
WHAT IF HE
CAN HEAR
US?

HE
PROBABLY
CAN'T HEAR A
THING WHILE
PROJECTING HIS
ASTRAL FORM
ACROSS
DIMENSIONAL
PLANES...

I CAN
HEAR
EVERY-
THING...



-SIGH-

DEADPOOL--
BE PREPARED, YOU
WILL BE ARRIVING
IN THE REALM OF
SARRIZHIMAR IN
BUT A MOMENT...



WHOA--THIS IS WORSE THAN I EXPECTED.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT--IT'S PARADISE!

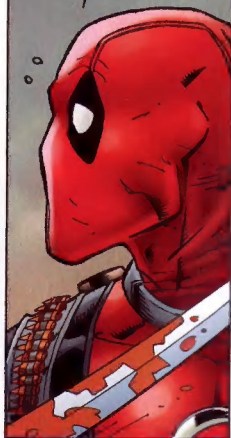
EVERY SINGLE GIRL HERE IS HOTTER THAN JESSICA BIEL!

I DON'T KNOW, BOB-- THERE SURE ARE A LOT OF WOMEN...

... IN MY EXPERIENCE, THAT NEVER TURNS OUT TO BE A GOOD THING...



IT'S ONLY THE ONE YOU MARRY THAT YOU HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT.



PANG. I GOT AN ITCH, TOO.

BUT I CAN'T LET THEM SCRATCH IT OR BAD THINGS WILL HAPPEN...

IS THAT MY OWN HALITOSIS I SMELL...?



SPLAT

SPLUCH

HUH--?



NOT EVEN
MY FANTASIES
TURN OUT
RIGHT...



THAT'S
FUNNY--ALL
OF MINE TURN
OUT JUST LIKE
THIS!

I'M STUCK HERE
FORCED TO FIND T-RAY,
A GUY I HATE, MOSTLY
'CAUSE HE HATES ME, AND
SAVE THE MULTIVERSE
ON ACCOUNT OF ME
KILLING T-RAY IS WHAT
CAUSED THE PROBLEMS
TO BEGIN WITH--

--AND I CAN'T
EVEN ENJOY THE ONLY
GALS I'VE MET IN MY
ENTIRE LIFE WHO HAVE
JAWS CAPABLE OF
HANDLING THE WONDER
THAT IS ME!

YOU MUST
LEAVE THIS REALM
IMMEDIATELY.

-GAAK!-

WAIT--I
THOUGHT YOU
WERE GETTING
US TO OUR
TARGET--!

CAN'T WE
STAY?

I MEAN, CAN
YOU GIVE THEM
SOMETHING TO
CALM THEM
DOWN?

A MAGIC
VALIUM OR
CHOCOLATE?

OOH, I
WANT
CHOCOLATE,
TOO!

-SIGH...-

PREPARE FOR A
TRANSDIMENSIONAL
SHUNT!



A BOAT?
WE'RE ON
A BOAT.

AND
ME WITHOUT MY
DRAMAMINE...

THIS HAS
BECOME MORE
THAN A LITTLE
BIT TERRIFYING
SIR--

--I'M ON
THE EDGE OF
BEWILDER-
MENT.

YEAH, BOB...
HOLD THAT
THOUGHT FOR
A SECOND...



... 'CAUSE I
THINK WE'RE
GONNA NEED
A BIGGER
BOAT...





I AM SICK OF
THESE S#*%*'S
DRAGONS ON THIS
S#*%*'S BOAT!

I REALLY
CAN DO BETTER
THAN THAT, I
KNOW...



BUT IT'S TOUGH
JUGGLING RANDOM
ACTS OF STUPEFYING
BRAVADO WITH INANE
PATTER.



BOB--
ARE YOU
GOING TO
BARF?

POSSIBLY.

IF YOU BARF
ON ME WHILE I'M
IN THE MIDDLE OF
SAVING OUR LIVES
I'LL BE VERY
DISAPPOINTED

I
UNDERSTAND,
SIR. -URP-
THIS HAS ALL
BEEN VERY
UPSETTING...



YOU KNOW,
BOB, THIS HAS
BEEN NOTHING IF
NOT AN ENJOYABLE
ROLLERCOASTER
RIDE THROUGH
MORDOR--

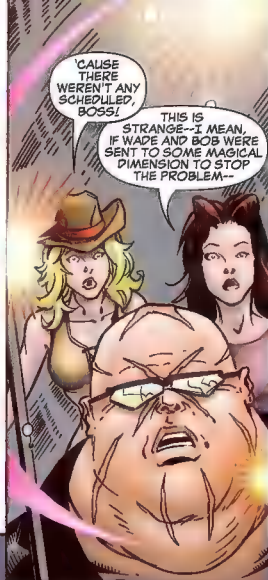
--BUT I, TOO,
AM BEGINNING TO
SHARE IN YOUR
CONFUSION.



TIME GROWS
SHORT: YOU
MUST HURRY TO
YOUR NEXT
DESTINATION...



FIREWORKS
WEREN'T ON MY
SCHEDULE.



'CAUSE
THERE
WEREN'T ANY
SCHEDULED,
BOSS!

THIS IS
STRANGE--I MEAN,
IF WADE AND BOB WERE
SENT TO SOME MAGICAL
DIMENSION TO STOP
THE PROBLEM--



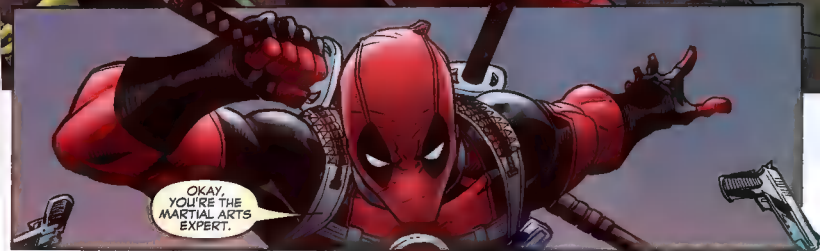
"--THEN WHY ARE THINGS
TURNING ALL SPARKY
AROUND HERE--?"

WILSON...
BULLETS ARE
USELESS AGAINST THE
ELITE PROTECTORATE
OF THE EXALTED
BRAHL...

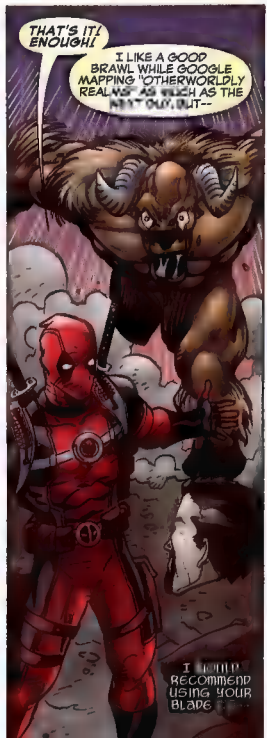
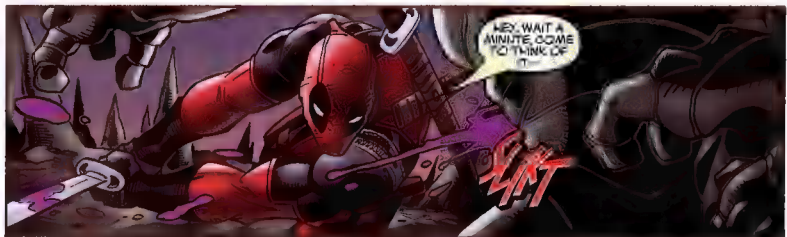


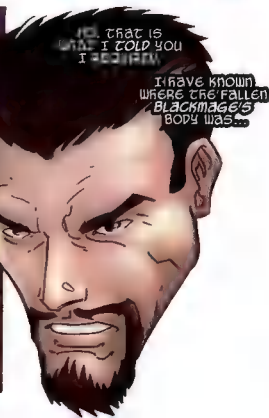
HIDE!
HIDE!
HIDE!

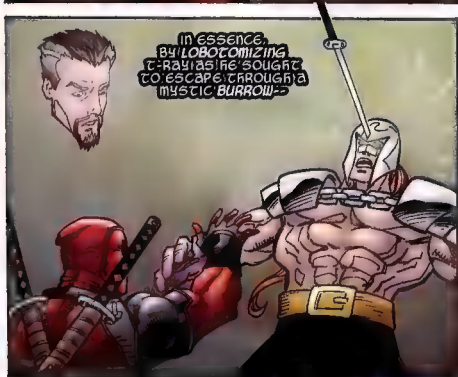
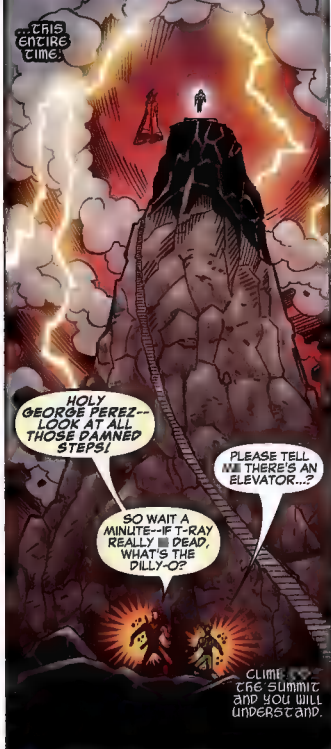
SO MIGHT I
SUGGEST YOU TRY
USING YOUR KATANA
BLADE INSTEAD?



OKAY,
YOU'RE THE
MARTIAL ARTS
EXPERT.



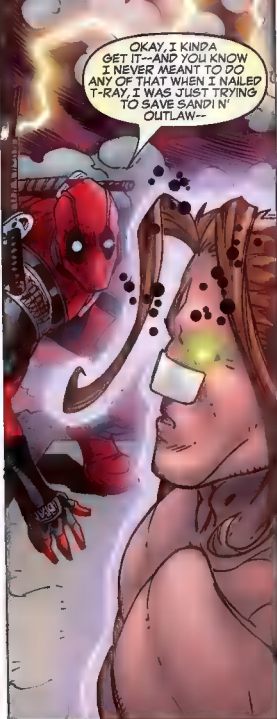




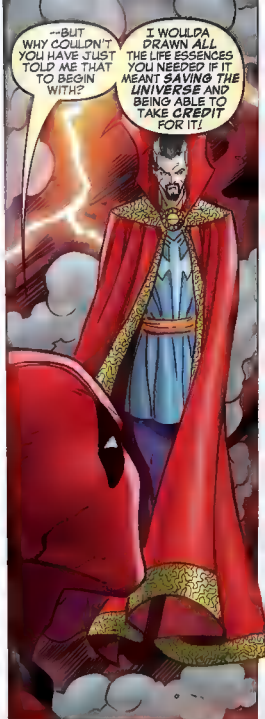


TO CROSS
THE BOUNDARIES
A PORTION OF LIFE
ESSENCE DRAWN
FROM EACH REALM
WAS NEEDED--

--IN ORDER TO
REPLACE THAT WHICH
T-RAY LOST UPON
HIS DESCENT.



OKAY, I KINDA
GET IT--AND YOU KNOW
I NEVER MEANT TO DO
ANY OF THAT WHEN I NAILED
T-RAY, I WAS JUST TRYING
TO SAVE SANDI'N'
OUTLAW--



--BUT
WHY COULDN'T
YOU HAVE JUST
TOLD ME THAT
TO BEGIN
WITH?

I WOULD'VE
DRAWN ALL
THE LIFE ESSENCES
YOU NEEDED IF IT
MEANT SAVING THE
UNIVERSE AND
BEING ABLE TO
TAKE CREDIT
FOR IT!

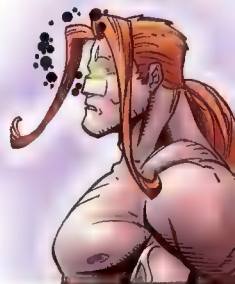
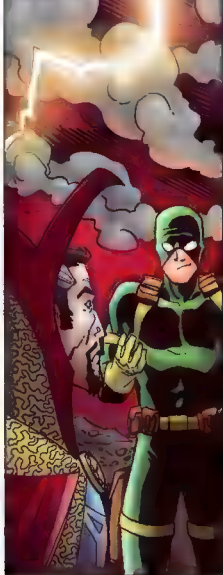


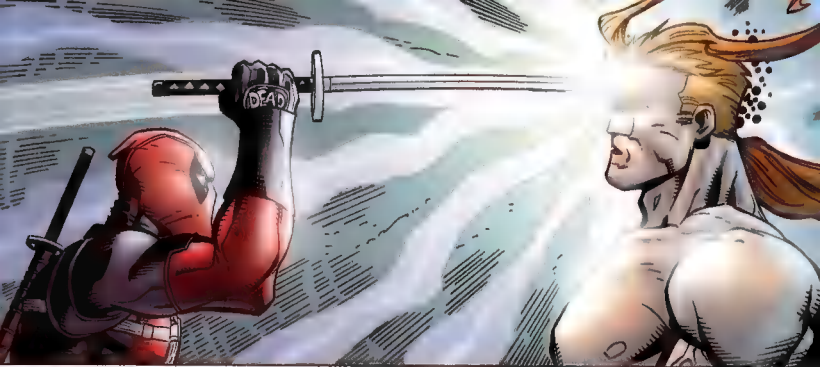
I HAD NOT TRUST YOU
WOULD DO AS I ASKED, IRON WILSON--
BUT IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD, THE
FINAL INITIATION OF THIS
LONG JOURNEY--



--REQUIRES
THAT YOU
RESTORE
T-RAY TO
LIFE!

OH, C'MON.
THAT IS SO
TOTALLY
UNFAIR!





**YOUR ASSIGNMENT
IS NOT COMPLETED. YOU
WERE FIRED TO ATONE
FOR THE PROBLEM YOU
CREATED.**

FOR T-RAY
TO BE WHOLE, A
JOINING 'TWTX
BODY AND SPIRIT
IS REQUIRED.

OKAY, BUT
WHERE ARE
YOU--



LORD, IT
SMELLS LIKE
A SWAMP!

OH.

ARE WE IN
SOME KIND OF BACK
WATER, SULFUROUS
HELLHOLE OUTER
DIMENSION?

NO, WE'RE IN LOUISIANA.

PLEASE
TELL ME YOU
BROUGHT
DRUMS WITH
YOU...?

WELCOME
TO THE HOME
OF...

**DUM DUM
DUM DUM
DUM DUM**



DUM DUM DUM
DUM DUM DUM
DUM DUM DUM
DUM DUM
DUM DUM
DUM DUM
DUM DUM
DUM DUM DUM

**NEXT: WHO DO
THAT VOODOO THAT
HE DO SO WELL?**

"DEAR DEADPOOL" returns next month!
Send letters to mheroes@marvel.com,
and mark them "Okay to Print."

FURY'S FILES

Discovered in a discontinued S.H.I.E.L.D. safehouse, below is a list of little-known facts about the Avengers that Nick Fury had personally collected to be used or leveraged when necessary.



According to the original Avengers charter, "No Avenger shall be required to surrender knowledge of his or her civilian identity or personal affairs to the membership at large or the National Security Council."

Although having the appearance of a grown man, Rage was only thirteen years old when he joined the Avengers.

While on a leave of absence from the Fantastic Four so that they could spend more time with their son Franklin, Mister Fantastic and the Invisible Woman ended up temporarily joining the Avengers.

The Wasp came up with the name for the Avengers.

Kang, Rama-Tut, Immortus, and Iron Lad are all the same person but at different points in their life, living in different eras of time.

After a momentous victory, Hawkeye would often throw a barbeque for the team to celebrate.

Although Matt Murdock has acted as the Avengers' legal counsel, most notably when he helped them oppose Henry Peter Gyrich's attempt to shut down the team's operation, Daredevil has declined every offer to join the team.

Captain America served as the Avengers Chairperson 110 times throughout his membership in the team.

Ultron used the original Human Torch's body to make the Vision.

Firestar was originally created for the Saturday morning animated series, *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends* and eventually made her debut in Marvel Comics when she was recruited by Emma Frost to join the Hellions.

The Maria Stark Foundation has issued cease and desist letters to the Great Lakes Avengers for their use of the name "Avengers."

Avengers Mansion was located at 890 Fifth Avenue in New York City.

While acting as the Avengers' liaison to the United States National Security Council, Henry Peter Gyrich forced the team to trim their roster to seven members and replace Hawkeye with the Falcon to be in compliance with affirmative action laws.

In their earliest appearances, the Black Widow was a Soviet spy who tricked Hawkeye into helping her steal technologies developed by Stark Industries.

Actor Nicholas Cage changed his surname from Coppola to Cage based on the character of Luke Cage.

The Wasp had eight different costumes in the first ten issues of *The Avengers*.



PORTFOLIO REVIEW

He's a Greek demigod. He's been an Avenger. He's wanted for his actions in both *Civil War* and *World War Hulk*. But this December, Hercules has decided he's done running, and ready to face anyone, mere mortal or more, who dares challenge him! Joined by the breakout star of *World War Hulk*, Amadeus Cho, Herc takes over the mantle for his fallen comrade, as the *Incredible Hulk* becomes the *Incredible Herc* scribe Greg Pak is joined by rising star writer Fred Van Lente and red-hot artist Khoi Pham on a book that knows no mercy, no fear, and no bounds. Zounds!

Here is a sneak peek from the creative team about the new direction, look, and action found in *The Incredible Herc*!

"I was really excited to draw Herc and Cho. I love taking perceived second-tier characters and making them cool. For instance, there's not much more I could do to make Spider-Man cool, because, well, he's already cool. But a big Greek barroom brawler in a skirt and tiara and his Asian sidekick Short Round, I mean, Cho? Sign me up."

— Khoi Pham



"Seriously, Herc's a god, so I wanted to make sure he's depicted as such through his expressions and body language. And Cho's a pretty dangerous kid that needs to be drawn with a bit of an edge."

— Khoi Pham



"I love Khoi for totally rocking both the action and humor of the book. As just one example, panel 1 of page 17 is just a perfectly framed, amazingly dynamic comic book action shot, with great staging of our heroes and awesome missiles and smoke and debris all over the place. And there's a very surprised-looking fish on page 20 that I just love. Like Fred says, Khoi is giving us everything we put in the script and more, more, more, and we're loving every panel."

— Greg Pak



"What any comics writer wants is an artist who actualizes the script better than the writer imagined it, and that's what Greg and I have with Khoi — he depicts Herc fighting off Kevlar-wearing capekillers with assault rifles equally as well as him hacking and slashing giant monsters in ancient Greece, which is exactly what this story needs, and I couldn't be happier."

— Fred Van Lente

THE INCREDIBLE HERC
DECEMBER 2007

LOOK WHO'S TALKING!

DAN ABNETT & ANDY LANNING



MARVEL: You guys are well-known for your sci-fi work here in the U.S. (such as *Annihilation* and the related series), in addition to your work for 2000 AD in the United Kingdom. What makes sci-fi such an infinitely interesting genre to you?

DAN: I've always been a fan of science fiction, and grew up reading Vance, Heinlein, Herbert and the like. I also was a regular reader of 2000 AD long before I was a regular contributor. The glib answer is that in SF, you can do just about anything. It's a venue for unbridled imagination. But I think the real key to good SF is when the imaginative possibilities are pushed, yet presented in a way they still seem credible and plausible.

ANDY: Dan and I have also always loved Marvel's cosmic characters and stories, especially Jim Starlin's work on Captain Marvel and Warlock. In a cosmic setting, a superhero costume becomes more of a uniform or a protective suit, rather than something you put on in a phone booth to protect your secret identity.

M: You've also been involved in crafting some huge events for Marvel's space characters. What's it like to coordinate something so far-reaching?

ANDY: Dan's written so many combat SF novels for Games Workshop, he's pretty good at keeping control of major plot structures.

DAN: We keep notes. Lots of notes. When we get together to plot and brainstorm, I bring a large holdall full of notes and photocopies and scribbled ideas. We've also been known to cover the door of Andy's office with Post-It notes, each one with a plot idea or character moment on it, so we can move them around and change the order of sequences. The real secret, however, is (editor) Bill Rosemann, who coordinates it all.

•**SPOILER ALERT**• In *Annihilation Conquest*, your big reveal was that Ultron was the baddie. How did you coordinate that with Brian Bendis & his recent usage of Ultron in *Mighty Avengers*?

DAN: We got the okay to use Ultron, and got to read Brian's first *Mighty Avengers* scripts in advance, which was a massive treat (both of us are BMB fans).

ANDY: I think *Annihilation Conquest* is going to have to cover the link between the stories, and how Ultron ended up where he did.

M: You've been inundated with critical acclaim from all corners. What's it like to receive such universal praise?

ANDY: Fantastic. It's great to hear that we're doing something the way people think it should be done. I don't let Dan read them. It goes to his head.

DAN: I'm really pleased we seem to be attracting the attention of people who are usually turned off by the word "cosmic." I certainly appreciate all the kind words.

M: Everyone's got their favorite "unappreciated" Marvel hero or team they'd love to write. Who fits the bill for you guys?

DAN: It's easy to pick the Marvel characters we'd love to take a crack at... The Avengers, Thor, Iron Man, Daredevil...

ANDY: Doctor Strange. The Fantastic Four...

DAN: Absolutely. Trouble is, none of them need fixing, as they're all being handled by such great teams. Which sucks for us.

ANDY: Maybe we can get the Secret Defenders back together?

DAN: What, for a benefit concert?

M: Now over in Nova, you've been giving Rich Rider a hard time. Doesn't he deserve a break?

ANDY: He certainly needs a kip*. We were thinking of doing an issue where he spends the whole thing catching up on his sleep.

DAN: Actually, it would be really interesting to find out what his limits are, even supported by the suit and the Worldmind. How long can he keep running on empty?

ANDY: As for the cosmic threats, invasions, emotional bumps... no one ever said it would be easy being a Nova Centurion.

M: Reading Nova, he seems like a natural fit for you. When writing, does one of you act like Rich and the other act like the Worldmind?

DAN: In terms of personal experience, when we're writing Nova, I tend to think about the time I spent serving two tours with the starcorps off Zeta Reticula.

ANDY: Actually, I think the personal experience we both draw on is our memories of reading Nova the first time around, of being kids when he was just a kid getting superpowers. We remember the excitement and the fun.

M: Living in America, sometimes we forget how we appear to the rest of the world and don't realize how funny some things are (such as the massively large portions of food we serve). Any other humorous insights on America that readers might enjoy hearing?

DAN: When we're in New York, we're often stopped by strangers who ask us to "say something in your lovely accent," which is exceedingly weird.

ANDY: You've got very nice trains.

DAN: He's easily pleased. The portion-size thing is absolutely true. I was in Chicago recently, and a waiter had to come out and "demonstrate the meat," such was the range and sheer scale of the steaks on offer. For desert, there was a macadamia turtle pie. Unable to move or remember my own name by that stage, I asked, mockingly, what form the turtle came in. The waiter, deadpan, told me it was the name of the basin they served the half gallon of ice cream in.

ANDY: Just one more wafer-thin mint, sir? I'm always amused by the differences that exist in one language. You say "aluminium" and we say "aluminum," you say "eggplant" and we say "aubergine," you say "herbs" and we say "herb." Oh, that one doesn't work written down. There's an "h" at the start, people!

* In the UK, a kip is a holiday.

'Nuff Said!

QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS!

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MARVEL MOMENT?

"When they hired me!"
- LEINIL YU - Artist
(New Avengers)

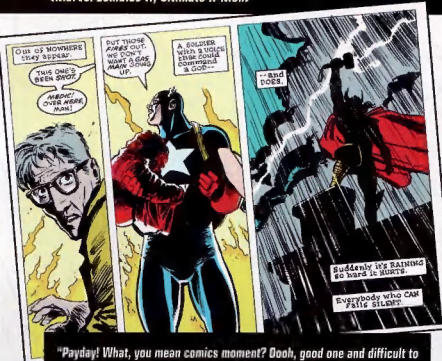


"Probably Amazing Spider-Man #33 when Spidey lifts the giant hunk of junk off himself so that he can go rescue Aunt May. A terrific combination of words and visuals."
- PETER DAVID - Writer
(X-Factor, She-Hulk)

"As a kid, Captain America getting killed in Infinity Gauntlet, what... five or so, really shocked me. I didn't know any better, so I thought it was all real permanent stuff. It was crazy. Now, it's gotta be something in the Lee/Kirby Fantastic Four run... there's so much to choose from."
- ROBERT KIRKMAN - Writer
(Marvel Zombies II, Ultimate X-Men)



"Kitty Pryde joining the X-Men has a very warm place in my heart. That was the issue I discovered the X-Men (and that Wolverine's name was Logan), so it was pretty magical for me."
- MARC GUGGENHEIM - Writer
(Amazing Spider-Man, Marvel Comics Presents)



"Payday! What, you mean comics moment? Oooh, good one and difficult to choose but one of my favorites was during Frank Miller's tenure as writer with David Mazzucchelli on Daredevil. In the last issue of 'Born Again,' the Avengers appear for just a few panels. There's the line about Cap telling Thor to put out the fires 'with a voice that could command a god and does.' That's the birth of Modern Marvel comics right there and it's clearly an ancestor of Ultimates."
- BRYAN HITCH - Artist
(Ultimates, Fantastic Four)



"Let go. Die, Charles. I'm going to catch you." "Phoenix holding Charles Xavier's disintegrating consciousness inside her own until his body can be retrieved from Cassandra Nova. Courtesy of Grant Morrison, in New X-Men #125!"
- MIKE CAREY - Writer
(X-Men, Ultimate Fantastic Four)



"Any worktime spent with my father."
- JOHN ROMITA JR. - Artist
(World War Hulk, Amazing Spider-Man)

NOW YOU KNOW!